

AUTHOR & JOURNALIST



Photograph by Walter Chandoha

"The editor that doesn't buy this manuscript is a dirty dog"

**WRITER, TELL
THE TRUTH**



**MY FIRST
SPORTS STORY**



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A CHALLENGE TO WRITERS,

known or unknown! Ability essential, but *imagination* is your biggest asset. No restrictions on theme, no magazine taboos. This competition is open to all!

RULES. Anyone, anywhere, is eligible. Entries must be original, unpublished science-fiction novels — preferred lengths 60,000 to 100,000 words. Authors may submit any number of entries. \$4000.00 in cash will be paid immediately to the Grand Prize Winner, of which \$500.00 is an outright gratuity, and \$3500.00 a minimum, guaranteed advance against royalties (non-returnable) at standard rates. Contest closes September 30, 1952. Grand Prize Winner will be announced on or before December 31, 1952. Decision of the judges, Everett F. Bleiler and T. E. Dikty, editors of the annual *BEST SCIENCE-FICTION STORIES*, will be final. Unsuccessful entries will be returned thereafter by express collect unless otherwise instructed.

Hints to contestants. Give us an exciting, unusual story. Audacious concepts welcomed. Science must be sound, but more important to us is human motivation and sustained story interest. Don't worry about startling the judges.

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We are searching for great science-fiction writing — better than the best now appearing! We know it exists somewhere, in the guts and imagination of someone reading about this contest. Perhaps a portion of it is already on paper. We want something fresh, original — a work so outstanding that it will gain new readers for science-fiction, and gratify old readers as well.

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AUTHOR & JOURNALIST

VOLUME 37

NUMBER 4

NELSON ANTRIM CRAWFORD, Editor

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APRIL, 1952



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It Is Quite True . . .

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There is a 'Story Formula'. It is used in 95% of the stories published today. Are you using it?

A post card will bring our free Road Map For Writers.

MASTER FORMULA

P.O. Box 1741

Fresno, California

Come, gather round

By NELSON ANTRIM CRAWFORD

LIKE most writers, 90 per cent of readers of *Author & Journalist*, if I may judge from correspondence, are friends of cats. They'll enjoy getting acquainted with another cat lover, for folks fond of cats form a closer-knit fraternity than the Masons or the Knights of Columbus or the Two-Seed-in-the-Spirit Predestinarian Baptists. Even the few readers who are militantly against



Walter Chandoha

cats may be interested in learning how these animals formed the means for development of an international reputation in four short years.

The reputation is Walter Chandoha's. His camera study of his pet Loco—the most photographed cat in the world—adorns the *A&J* cover. He is the only person whose sole profession is photographing cats. His files contain close to 4,000 selected negatives.

How was he directed into his life work? Through chance, an act of Providence, or what you will. He'd been a professional photographer—for advertising agencies, for the Army in the Pacific—through the comparatively few years since he got out of high school. Back from war, however, he had about decided to become an advertising copywriter and was studying for it in New York University.

Striding through a swirling blizzard on the way from the university to his apartment one evening, he heard a faint cry. Huddled far back on a doorstep was a gaunt grey tabby kitten. Chandoha picked up the cat, held it inside his overcoat, and took it home. Warned and fed, Tabby began playing on the floor. Chandoha reached for his camera, made a dozen shots.

He showed the prints to editors and advertising men whom he knew. If you can do this sort of thing, why take a grueling job in an agency? they asked him.

From then on, copywriting was out of Chandoha's future. The day he got his university de-

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gree, he set himself up on Long Island as a photographer of cats only. That was less than four years ago. He is still there, with five cats, a mass of photographic equipment, a telephone jangling with orders—and international fame.

The many camera fans among *A&J* readers will want to know how he does his superb job. Back of it, of course, are a sure artistic taste, a wide knowledge of photography, and a personality to which cats universally respond. As for equipment, he ordinarily uses a Rolleiflex with flash operated by an extension cord. He directs studio lamps to produce just the effect he wants. Out-of-doors he prefers a 4x5 Speed Graphic.

Chandoha's success, I feel, offers some pertinent suggestions to us writers.

For one thing, he was ready when opportunity—in his case in the form of inspiration—came. He could take advantage of it because he had the training and experience.

The highly specialized nature of his work is another point worth the consideration of writers. Far be it from me to say that every writer should be a specialist, but my observation is that it is easier for the average writer to carve a niche for himself in some specialty.

And then I come, as usual, to emphasis on work. A thousand professional photographs a year that pass Chandoha's own critical judgment—I just wonder how the average writer's production stacks up beside that in time and effort and labor; I know darned well how mine does, and I'm ashamed to say. It's work, more than anything else, that will give us the recognition we want. Of course, being impatient, we'd like it to come soon as it did to Chandoha, but there are certain values in its coming late.

My Uncle Wilbur used to say as he worked in his garden with the dubious assistance of his big Black cat: "We wouldn't want every plant to bloom at the same time, would we, Blackie? The point is that they all do bloom if they are any good."

FOR writers who really want to go places with their writing, there will be an answer to their desires in the *May Author & Journalist*—and the issues that follow it month after month.

Ethel and I have heard many a writer say, "What wouldn't I give to find out how a professional does it!" He now can find out. A top flight author has consented—and consented with enthusiasm—to explain comprehensively just how one attains success in writing.

Next month there will begin a series of articles "On Becoming a Writer" by August Derleth, author of 60 outstanding books of fiction, verse, biography, and other types of writing, contributor to over 300 magazines ranging from the pulps to the *Atlantic Monthly* and the *Yale Review*. I feel sure every reader of *Author & Journalist* is familiar with some of his work.

This will be as useful and important a series as any writers' magazine has ever had the privilege of publishing. It is not made up of tricks and shortcuts. Instead it relates in detail the methods, the practices, the habits of work, that have put Mr. Derleth in the forefront of American writers.



A MESSAGE TO THE WORLD THE PRESIDENT CALLING

Scenes from the Great Musical Drama,
"The Storm at Sea"

The most heartening news coming from Captain Osborne and crew of the "Good-Will" Ship of State, as they sail from port to port with their message to the world, is the high degree of intelligence manifested among the people regarding the importance of our basic laws of life. Fully aware that these laws are betrayed by wars and excessive taxation, they long for peace and prosperity and are waiting to see whether the democrats of the world under new leadership can show the way out. All agree that the year 1952 is the most crucial year in world history. Who will sponsor this mission of mercy? Who will portray one of the greatest stories ever told?

Manuscript on Review

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What readers say

Notice to Otis

"After 30 years' trying."
If not dead, I'll be dying!

DOROTHY W. CATON

Billings, Mont.

Cats' and Authors' Faces

I find *A&J* interesting and helpful, and it doesn't matter who or what is on the cover. I like cats; they all photograph beautifully. And like the eyes of Arthur F. Otis, most authors' photos give a message—kindness, understanding, and courage.

MARIA REMBERT

Chicago, Ill.

A Million Words—All Wrong

I've been a subscriber a long time. *A&J* is TOPS now. Keep it up.

And please emphasize the fact that there is no magic formula to good writing. It is work, and hard work.

Also, the old bromide of having to write a million words before one learns the technique. If those million words are all written wrong, then they have been of no value whatever.

I know, because I wrote them, all wrong. Am on the way up now.

LIMA LYMAN

Newton Falls, Ohio

There's Stuff Everywhere, Ross

Ross F. Kavaner states in *A&J* that it is hard to find story material and that we writers wouldn't recognize it if we fell flat on our faces in a pile of it.

Now, then, Ross, I am surprised at you. I thought that story material was the least of a writer's troubles. Of course most of my stuff is articles. However, my trouble is to find the time to get it all down on paper. I pick up material in the world around me, conversations overheard, stuff I read, observations, and there seems no end to it.

BLANCHE QUINT

Detroit, Mich.

I Asked Magazine Readers

Just a thought in line with reader Torrey Smith's comment, "Do editors know?" I have been wondering, too. One day in the East, while I was browsing around a newsstand, a woman picked up a magazine, glanced at the table of contents, then put it down with, "Huh! When they start printing some good stories again, I'll take it. Who wants to read all those stuffy articles?"

I'd been feeling rather the same way myself.

AUTHOR & JOURNALIST

so I went around asking some of my friends and neighbors what they liked or didn't like about magazines these days. You might be interested in some of the comments: "I quit taking _____ when they dropped all fiction." "Too many of those 'how-to' articles in _____." "When you try something, it usually doesn't work anyway." "Prices too high for what you get in magazines these days." "No good stories any more." "Too many hash-over articles from the news."

The big magazines have been spending a lot of money recently in subscription drives. Maybe it would be a good idea for them to spend a little to find out what readers really want. What do you think?

MARGARET L. HOPCRAFT

Albuquerque, N. M.

MSS. Astounded Him

Your magazine really gets around. What is more, it reaches the right people. The short flurb you printed about our editorial wants has produced astounding results. Manuscripts are coming in fast and furious. And some are mighty interesting. Many thanks.

J. H. LAVELY
News Editor

The Waterways Journal
St. Louis, Mo.

Climate of Good Writing

The article by Paul Annixter, "I Write by Feel," is the best of its kind I have ever read, admirable from both a theoretical and a practical viewpoint, and defining a direction in writing that many of us have been groping for in present years.

Some of our best writers—Ezra Pound, Virginia Woolf, etc.—have shown the climate and background of good writing and given their theories of what should be attained, but except for detailing a few individual methods, have left the application of their theories the problem of the writer. Failing solution, the writer is then forced to tailor his material in the limited patterns of the various formula tradesmen.

If the article reaches young writers floundering, as I have been, in the academic "it-comes-by-inspiration," the "sit-down-and-knock-out-ten-thousand-words-for-the-pulps" cult, and other misleading approaches, it should do a great deal toward establishing a vital connection between the talented but confused author and a public which by majority spends more on symphony concerts than baseball games, prefers fine foreign films to most Hollywood spectacles, and refuses to vote as the newspapers and radio tell it that it will. What Mr. Annixter says about the lag behind scientific advance is especially significant.

Mrs. G. H. McGRATH

Pacific Grove, Calif.

A LITERARY CONSULTANT is a person who helps you create salable writings; a literary agent sells what is created. The two functions are separate and distinct, and are not customarily performed by the same person. The agent solicits marketable material only, for no agent can sell manuscripts until they are salable.

As a consultant, it is my job to determine what is wrong with your manuscript and help you make it right before an editor or agent sees it. I then refer you to a competent New York agent, if you wish to work through one.

My aid consists of CORRECTIVE CRITICISM, PROFESSIONAL EDITING or COMPLETE REVISION, as your special needs may indicate.

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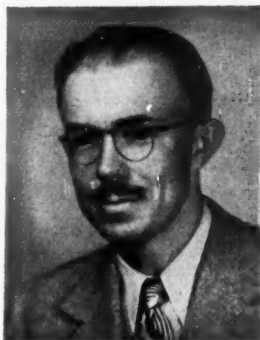
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CHARLES CARSON, *Literary Consultant*

601 So. Vermont Ave., Los Angeles 5, Calif.



What Editors Want Now

A.D., quarterly magazine, is now in the market for off-trail, hard-hitting, realistic fiction, poetry, and criticism, with emphasis on quality writing. A number of distinguished authors are among the contributors, but young talent is encouraged. No payment is being made at present.

- A&J -

Recurrence and Variegation are the two poetry quarterlies edited by Grover Jacoby, Room 540, 124 W. 4th St., Los Angeles 13, Calif. The former uses rhymed poetry; the latter, free verse. Material of high literary quality is published. The magazines make cash payment for all contributions.

- A&J -

American Forests, 919 17th St. N.W., Washington 6, D. C., is a possible market for fiction dealing with outdoor life in a fresh way. Payment is 3¢ a word. Nort Base is editor.

- A&J -

Farm and Ranch-Southern Agriculturist, 318 Murfreesboro Road, Nashville 10, Tenn., offers a limited market for fiction but pays higher than most farm journals—up to 5¢ a word. Short-stories with farm background are the best bet.

- A&J -

Donley Lukens Business News, P. O. Drawer 1312, Las Vegas, Nev., seeks business news correspondents in communities of 15,000 or less in the Rocky Mountain states. No town is too small. The organization operates chiefly on an assignment basis, with payment from 1/2¢ to 1 1/2¢ a word. Address K. S. Lukens.

- A&J -

UTO, monthly motor freight industry journal, is now located at 50 W. Broad St., Columbus 15, Ohio. C. Peter Zurlinden, Jr., is still editor and publisher.

- A&J -

The three *Times* weekly newspapers in Marin County, Calif., want short stories and articles with home-town and suburban appeal. Under 500 words; payment, \$2 on acceptance. Poems are accepted also but without payment. Editor for the project is Mary Otis Davis, Writers Workshop, Box 73, San Anselmo, Calif.

- A&J -

Better Careers, devoted to opportunities in education, employment, and business, will shortly publish its initial issue. Contributions are not invited till after the magazine appears, and then will be welcome. Editor is Joseph Greenberger, General Publications, 321 S. 4th Ave., Mt. Vernon, N. Y.

- A&J -

Two network shows are seeking scripts, 21 minutes playing time. *Stars Over Hollywood*, heard over CBS Saturday mornings, uses comedy-drama and young romance with strong feminine appeal and some appeal to children. An occasional fantasy (religious or melodramatic) may

be considered, as may also holiday scripts if submitted far enough in advance. Characters must be limited to the star and four supporting players. Because of casting difficulties, the star must not be an older man or woman or a child. Address: *Stars Over Hollywood*, 9370 Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, Calif.

The other show—ABC Sunday evenings in U. S. A., other days in Canada—is *Hollywood Stars on Stage*, with substantially the same casting requirements. It emphasizes adventure and romance, but mystery, fantasy, holiday and other scripts are considered. Stories must interest listeners in Canada as well as the United States. Address: *Hollywood Stars on Stage*, Revue Productions, Inc., 9370 Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, Calif.

- A&J -

The usual brief filler features in *Country Gentleman* are being retained and are open for contributions. However, material has been bought for several years ahead for "Remember?" and so writers had better cross this department off their lists for the present.

- A&J -

Mrs. Isabelle Taylor has been appointed chief associate editor of Doubleday & Company, 575 5th Ave., New York 22. She will continue to be editor-in-chief of Crime Books, Doubleday's mystery department.

- A&J -

Peggy P. Morris, the Newsette Co., 5205 Hollywood 27, Calif., invites material on interiors and window displays of retail specialty shops, preferably those carrying the Jean Durain of California line. Each item should contain a photograph, 4x5 or larger, and 100-400 words of copy; payment \$15 on acceptance. The material will be used in the Durain house organ.

- A&J -

The *Quatrain*, Box 166, Creal Springs, Ill., is a semiannual four-page publication devoted solely to quatrains with religious or moral themes. No payment except in prizes. H. L. Motsinger is editor.

- A&J -

Pep and Courage is the inspiring title of a monthly magazine published in the interest of tuberculosis patients. It uses informative, humorous, and how-to articles; some fillers, mostly humorous. Fiction is used rarely; poetry to a limited degree. No payment. The editor is Edward Macdonald, Firlan Sanatorium, 1704 E. 150th St., Seattle 55, Wash.

- A&J -

The *Country Poet*, Sanbornville, N. H., plans a *Child's Book of Verse* divided by age groups from the very small to teen age. Poetry and illustrations are invited; accepted material will be paid for on a royalty basis. The magazine itself is also in the market for poetry and art work, to be paid for on publication.

CONTEST ENDING APRIL 30TH!

\$40,000 IN CASH PRIZES FOR YOUR TRUE STORIES!

Here's a chance to add to your list of regular markets. Four of the top ranking magazines are looking for new writers and paying big prize money to inspire new talent. It means an opportunity to open the doors to what may be a brand new market that can easily become a steady source of income. And to you "youngsters," you beginning writers, this outstanding contest is a ready-made outlet to begin to test your abilities.

Two things are of utmost importance and must be remembered. First, your *stories must be true*. They may be from the lives of friends or relatives but they must be true. We are looking for true stories of real life experiences which will leave the reader with a greater understanding of living. Second, stylistic expression is of minor importance. This is a *story* contest and as such it is the nature of the experience and the vividness of the emotion with which it is described that will be the determining factors.

If your story is one of those accepted, it will appear in any one of these four best-selling first person magazines, — TRUE STORY — TRUE EXPERIENCE — TRUE LOVE STORIES — TRUE ROMANCE.

This is one of the biggest opportunities you'll find in the writing field. Don't miss this chance. Your deadline is only a month away, so hurry and send your story in as soon as you can.

CONTEST RULES

1. All stories must be written in the first person, based on events that happened either in your life or to people you know, and reasonable evidence of truth must be furnished upon request.

2. Stories must be not less than 1500 words or more than 20,000, and must be written in English.
3. Manuscripts must be typewritten double-spaced, or written legibly with pen. Write on one side of the paper only. Do not use tissue or onion skin paper.
4. Carbon copies of stories, unfinished manuscripts, previously published stories, printed material or poetry are not eligible as contest entries.
5. All entries become the property of Macfadden Publications, Inc. Stories will be returned only if full first-class postage and self-addressed return envelope have been enclosed with entry, and no responsibility is assumed for such return.
6. Macfadden Publications, Inc., reserves the right to buy at regular rates for possible publication any entry judged unacceptable for contest prizes.
7. You may submit more than one manuscript, but not more than one prize will be awarded to any individual in this contest.
8. In case of a tie, duplicate prizes will be awarded. The decision of the judges will be final.
9. Macfadden Publications, Inc., reserves the right to publish any of the prize-winning stories in TRUE STORY, TRUE ROMANCE, TRUE LOVE STORIES, or TRUE EXPERIENCE.
10. This contest is open to everyone everywhere in the world, except employees of Macfadden Publications, Inc., and their families.
11. This contest ends at midnight Wednesday, April 30, 1952. Entries postmarked after that date will not be considered.
12. Address manuscripts for this contest to: TRUE STORY CONTEST EDITOR, P. O. Box 1314, Grand Central Station, New York 17, N. Y.

CONTEST OPPORTUNITIES

\$60,000 for Writers

THIS is the outstanding year in the history of writing, so far as contests are concerned. Never before have as large or as varied awards been announced.

In the announcements below and in previous issues of *Author & Journalist* are opportunities for ambitious writers of all types to take advantage of.

A prize of \$4,000 is offered by Pocket Books, Inc., and Shasta Publishers for the best science fiction book manuscript submitted by August 31. Prizes of \$2,500 each will be awarded to a number of runners-up. Preferred length of stories is 60,000-100,000 words. Shasta, the leading trade book publisher of science fiction, will publish the winning MS. in hard covers; Pocket Books will subsequently issue a paperback edition. Entries should go to Shasta Publishers, 5525 Blackstone Ave., Chicago 37, Ill.

- A&J -

The Macfadden Women's Group, Box 1314, Grand Central Station, New York 17, offers 84 prizes totaling \$40,000, from a top of \$5,000 down to \$250, for first-person stories 1,500-20,000 words. Each story must be based on events that happened to the writer or to someone else. The contest is conducted by the four sister publications of the group, *True Story*, *True Love Stories*, *True Romance*, and *True Experiences*. Entries must be mailed by April 30.

- A&J -

Dodd, Mead & Company, in cooperation with *Boys' Life*, offers \$2,000 for the best story for boys 12 to 16 years old. The story must be "of distinctive literary merit and in the finest American tradition." The contest, which is open to writers of the United States and Canada, closes September 15. Particulars are obtainable from Dodd, Mead & Company, 432 4th Ave., New York 16.

- A&J -

The World Publishing Company, 107 W. 43rd St., New York 18, has announced a contest for religious novels of 60,000 words up. The prize is \$5,000. Manuscripts may "portray, dramatize, or reaffirm religious or inspirational teaching, of any denomination, set in any period or locale." Contest closes December 31.

- A&J -

A. S. Barnes & Company, 232 Madison Ave., New York 16, have established two annual awards in sports writing. One award of \$2,500 will be made for the best sports novel; the same amount for the best non-fiction work on sports or sport personalities. Minimum for each is 50,000 words. Closing date for 1952 is December 31.

Conquest, a new fiction magazine, offers a special opportunity to amateur writers of fiction. Prizes from \$2,000 down to \$250 will be awarded for the best short stories by new writers who are subscribers. Payment at regular rates will also be made for all stories published. Details are available from the publishers, Writers Contest Publications, Inc., 418 State St., St. Joseph, Mich.

- A&J -

Vantage Press, 230 W. 41st St., New York 18, offers 12 prizes from \$500 to \$25 for new endings to Marie Monchen's novel, *Achilles Absent*. Rules of the contest are obtainable from booksellers or from the Vantage Press.

- A&J -

The International Poetry Contest conducted by the Authors & Artists Club of Chattanooga is open to any unpublished poem under 32 lines. First prize is \$15, and the club expects also to use the best submissions in a future anthology. The contest closes May 1. Information is available from Mrs. J. Polk Stewart, 4102 Cherryton Drive, Chattanooga, Tenn.

- A&J -

The sixth annual Writing Contest for Hospitalized Veterans will close April 15. Details may be obtained from Hospitalized Veterans Writing Project, 919 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 11. Prizes include \$1,000 in cash plus merchandise prizes of equal value. Short stories, plays, verse, and other contributions by hospitalized veterans are eligible.

- A&J -

A round trip flight from New York to Paris plus a month's stay in the latter city is the first prize offered by *New-Story* in a contest for writers under 35 years. Word limit is 7,000 words. Translations into English are welcomed. Stories must be marked "New-Story Young Writers' Contest" and submitted to the editors at 6 Boulevard Poissonniere, Paris 9e, France. *New-Story* is devoted to fiction of high literary quality.

- A&J -

An award of \$100 plus production at the Lake Shore Playhouse, Derby, N. Y., is offered for the best full-length play submitted by May 15. The contest is sponsored by the Western New York Branch, League of American Pen Women, and the Lake Shore Playhouse. Entry blanks are obtainable from Mrs. Gertrude G. Hunt, 122 Pearl St., Buffalo 2, N. Y.

- A&J -

Houghton Mifflin Literary Fellowships are available this year, as usual. These are intended to enable authors to carry on literary projects that promise to be significant. Each award is \$2400, half of which is against royalties. Application blanks are obtainable from Houghton Mifflin Company, 2 Park St., Boston 7, Mass., or from *Author & Journalist*.

Spot News for Profit

Photo-journalism will be promoted nationally through courses at selected colleges and universities under the auspices of the National Press Photographers' Association jointly with Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc.

Three courses are scheduled for this year: short course, University of Kansas, Lawrence, April 17-19; seminar, Boston University, April 25; short course, University of Wisconsin, Madison, June 23-25.

The courses will emphasize camera reportage—the art of telling a newspaper story with pictures.

—A&J—

Comedy clinics are being held in Newark, N. J. (third Friday of each month); Stamford, Conn. (first Friday of each month); Philadelphia (second Friday of each month); Washington, D. C. (fourth Friday of each month). Clinics will open in Detroit, New Orleans, and St. Paul in April and May.

The clinics are part of the program of the National Association of Gagwriters to discover and develop young comedy writers and comedians.

Information is obtainable from George Lewis, Room 902, 292 Madison Ave., New York, who is executive director of the organization.

Vantage Press has reopened its Hollywood office in order to offer better facilities for West Coast writers interested in its program of cooperative publishing of books. The main offices of the firm will continue to be located at 230 W. 41st St., New York; the Hollywood office is at 6356 Hollywood Blvd.

—A&J—

The Drury College Annual Writers' Conference will be held April 18 and 19. This meeting brings together a large number of writers from the Ozarks—a region in which much literary work is being done. Information may be obtained from Adelaide H. Jones, Drury College, Springfield, Mo.

—A&J—

Congratulations to the *Writer*, which this month celebrates its sixty-fifth anniversary. Founded in 1887 as an organ for daily newspaper workers—such writers as the journalist and poet Eugene Field were early contributors—it has been for many years edited primarily for magazine and book writers. It has been consistently admired for its high literary standards and its interest in raising the quality of American writing, and A. S. Burack, the present editor, has added new vigor to the old tradition.

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MY FIRST SPORTS STORY

and What Made It Sell

Here is expert advice on getting over the highest hurdle in a special type of writing

By LEE FLOREN

ONE evening about ten years ago, weary of writing Western stories, I sat in front of that tyrant of tyrants—my typewriter—and I thought, "I wish I knew another type of yarn to sell," and I looked at battered old Elsie Smith. Then the thought came, "Why don't I try a sports story?"

I had been selling Western fiction for three years and I knew all the angles—yes, all of them. Today, almost a decade and 60 Western novels later, I realize I still have much to learn. Oh, the vanity of ignorance!

Accordingly I went to the corner newsstand and purchased a bunch of sports magazines. I read them all. A published story is a blueprint of what the particular editor desires. I wanted to learn the formula of those blueprints.

I wanted a check.

Not wanting to turn out a dud, I did some statistical work. I found that stories concerning prizefights and baseball games were, and still are, the most popular sports stories. I decided on a fight story. This objective attained, I gave some attention to the selection of a main character.

He would, of course, be a prizefighter. Readers of sports stories demand action—and this action must be physical, not psychological.

Remember how Tony Galento used to waddle around the ring? I modeled my protagonist after Galento. Because of his big belly my hero had

trouble keeping up his trunks. He was forever grabbing at them when they threatened to desert him. Therefore the fight mob had dubbed him "Suspenders." Thus I had a main character.

So far, so good. I told the blonde on the calendar over my desk. (The blonde did not even answer!)

At that time I had sold, so my records show, some 38 Western stories. They had been purchased by Street and Smith, Popular Publications, Columbia Publications, and other publishing houses, some now out of business. I knew the formula of a Western story. For all popular escape-fiction is written on formula. The sooner a would-be author learns that formula, the sooner he starts to cash those nice long editorial checks.

To sell a Western story one has to have an interesting and admirable protagonist, either male or female, and this protagonist must strive against worthy odds to gain a goal worth while—a ranch, another male or female, or even a horse.

I decided this same formula held good also for the sports story. Only, in the case of a sports story, the objective must be of another nature—win a game, win a girl, or win self-respect, or any other goal the writer conjures.

What was Suspenders' objective?

He had a restaurant, and it wasn't making money yet; he had just started it. He had a good fat wife, three fat kids, and he wanted to leave the fight racket all in one piece. Accordingly he fought with all he had, and he won the championship, and this dough was enough. This over, he did what Joe Louis should have done—he retired and stayed retired.

He worked his restaurant into a profitable business.

That was my first short sports story, and it worked. While I have written sports stories only as a sideline with my Westerns, I have sold every one I have written, and [Continued on Page 26]

Lee Floren studied at the University of Montana, Santa Barbara College, and Occidental College. He sold his first story when out of college one year. In the dozen years since, he has published more than 1000 magazine stories, Western and other, and 60 novels. He now lives in California, when he is engaged professionally in the writing of fiction.

The writer's life, both gay and sad—
But usually it's not too bad

Day-by-Day Experiences

From My Writing: Venison, Proposals

By LOIS MILLER

ANY WRITER would do well to realize early in his career that many items other than checks will come from writing. They are likely to amount to a great deal.

As soon as my work began to appear with reasonable regularity, the gifts began to come in. I wrote for small farm magazines and farm tabs, and often the loot would be a dozen fresh eggs, a mess of garden stuff, a fat hen dressed for the pan, or a live cackling hen which posed a transportation problem.

Hunks of venison and other game and several boxes of California fruit stemmed from my writing. Invitations to spend a week end at resorts whose range of prices would never be understood by my purse were not at all uncommon.

An antelope and a duck hand carved of wood, complimentary tickets to special events, an offer of adoption, and proposals of marriage have been part of my writing loot. (The latter two I declined.)

My most touching gift was a lonely banana in a brown paper sack and a dozen and a half carefully laundered "found" handkerchiefs. These were tendered by an appreciative oldster I had written up.

Interesting invitations have been numerous. Rooms and cars have been placed at my disposal.

A bigger payoff is found in the lasting friendships a writer forms. There has been a steady widening of my horizon. This, incidentally, means a steady increase in my material for articles.

I Concentrate on Love Poems

By IRENE MARTIN

MOST WRITERS and writers' journals advocate breaking into print by means of the short filler paragraphs, the jokes, the poems, etc., that all magazines use to round out their pages.

It's good sound advice, most novices concede, but they just can't seem to get started. They write and write and write, anything and everything, and nothing seems any good. It doesn't sell, any of it. They're still stuck. I know. I did the same thing myself when I started out.

I, too, got nowhere until I decided to concentrate on one type of filler for one field. I chose poems. I began sending them out to the love pulp and confession magazines, because those were the magazines I wanted to write for. I didn't waste any time and energies on anything else. I sat down and wrote poems, love poems, love stories told in verse. I made them as roman-

tic as I could, and packed them with emotion.

In less than two months a large pulp and confession house had bought two of them.

Today I sell my love poems regularly to this market. I get invaluable guidance from the editors. I make more than enough to keep me in supplies and stamps. More important, these poems have kept me plugging, kept me at my typewriter, kept me producing. As my confidence increased—nothing increases confidence like a check—I began writing and submitting short stories and articles to these same publications. My writing facility and ability improved, and there was always a check for a poem to take away the sting of a story reject.

Today I am past the hundred mark in my sales of these poems alone, in this one field. I am ready to take it from there to bigger things.

Humor from My Business

By FRANK W. BALL

IFILL out some 200 tax returns annually. An article on taxes must offer something new.

I am continually confronted with people who know the deductions better than I do—or so they think. I am asked to deduct from wages and salaries such items as lodge dues, tombstones, refrigerators, and jewelry.

I got the idea of writing a humorous article, at the same time enlightening, on income tax laws. I analyzed each request for a deduction,

and referred to the tax regulation that gave rise to the idea.

For instance, union dues are deductible. Among members, the union is known as a lodge. Thus from a member of, say, the Elks or the Odd Fellows: "Bill Jones got his lodge dues deducted down at the revenue office. Why can't I?"

I mailed my article to *America*, and received a check within a week.

Writer, Tell the TRUTH

A slashing attack on pressure groups that see prejudice in every printed line

By CHARLES SAMPSON

TOO many people in America today are trying to tell writers what to write and how to write it. They include bellicose propagandists, angry theologians, tea-and-muffins "educators," and kindred front-men for loud-mouthed pressure groups, whose diversely stated aims all boil down to intimidation of the writer, especially the younger and hungrier practitioner of the trade.

Their bludgeon is the familiar, cowardly dodge of dubbing as anti-this or pro-that—and therefore, curiously, somehow taboo—any thought, character, or situation which clashes with the assorted motives of these indignant bellwethers: of attempting to suppress by slander, imposture, and threat any idea which offends the conceits of axe-grinding groups whose grandiose pretensions are as transparent as the psychic quirks of the ham-and-egg Fuehrers who speak for them. Behind their backs, they hold ever ready the three standard moth-eaten bogeys of race, religion, and "class."

Sometimes gently quavered, sometimes loudly bellowed, their admonitions of late stress the startling theme that nobody anywhere shall ever be written about in an uncomplimentary—to-wit, honest—manner. Further, the writer is counseled to put more "brotherhood," less self-respect, less faith and patriotism, into his writing.

Most preposterous of all, the contention currently is heard that all writers, bar none, bear an obligation to endow with bogus dignity all specimens of the human race everywhere. Most particularly, it is further contended, does this obligation entail the need for lying about what are termed, for lack of intelligible words, "common people."

Behind all this unctuous and insidious blather is a firm hewing to a line, crazy in its tracery, but pointed unerringly toward depiction of all men as faceless, colorless, raceless "units" populating an amorphous blob. In brief, the Ideal of the Uplift.

Racial, religious, class bogeys have no place in anybody's formula for sincere writing, and attempts to inject them are always presumptuous and impudent, whatever the thumb that yearns

to jab the needle. Uplifters obviously never pause to realize, in their warm preoccupation with the faceless multitudes, that all races and all men have their own pristine animal peculiarities and spiritual peculiarities as well. Some of these attributes are exceedingly obnoxious. Many of them are shocking, even in mailable print. But all of them have been quite frankly admitted and even boasted of, at one time or another, by those whose destiny it is to bear them.

Race and religious prejudice mystify me. Their devotees seem as futile as a lunatic whom I once knew, whose vocation was the nailing of potatoes to other citizens' front doors. So I usually place open confidence in most men, not as a matter of effort, but because it is natural and easy to do so. When confidence and respect misfire, as they are bound to do on occasion, it is both natural and easy to turn elsewhere without rancor or hulla-balloo.

Until I was 16 or so, I never encountered the sound of prejudice because I never made a business of searching for it or inviting it. Then I was called "dog of an unbeliever" not by some lewd and pediculous Arab out of a Talbot Mundy tale, but by an itinerant Jewish peddler who added by way of bonus, "You ———, you eat pig!"

Here now, according to the modern formula. I should snuffle and spin you a pretty fable, and make the uplifters' hearts bleed by declaring that the imbecile taunt left a great wound, a pain that still makes me lock myself into the garret and weep. Well, it didn't. It struck me as inane and very funny. I never yet have eaten pig, I never intend to, and I still recall the incident as funny. I was able, you see, to *versteh* the Yiddish.

I am strongly in favor of sending colored boys to the Naval Academy, and to Groton and St. Paul's; of bidding their elders don the pink and ride to hounds, and cakewalk—along with the modern version of white gentry—at Baltimore's Bachelors' Cotillion; of inviting them to do as they damn well please anywhere anytime inside the limits prescribed for all of normal and mannered humanity.

But if I feel impelled to write a piece about a characterful manservant of revered memory, I'll honestly tell you first of all that he was a blackamoor. He stole half my larder every week. He illicitly carried my clothing to a hockshop, kept by no dignified altruist, but by a scurvy usurer often in trouble with the cops. He carved his chums with a knife and joyously punctured his malodorous harem with an icepick. It was routine for me to find him drunk in his white coat

Charles Sampson is a journalist and magazine writer now living in New Jersey. He has worked on newspapers in various cities, and was a member of the group of writers—H. L. Mencken, Gerald W. Johnson, and others—that made Baltimore notable in literary circles a few years ago.

in the bathtub when I returned from eight hours of editorializing about holdups and rapes and \$2 murders, committed, incidentally, by "common people" who stuck their idiotic necks away out in demanding that police and hangman abuse their dignity to the fullest. The emerging character will be far less a caricature or zoo exhibit than the straw "persecuted black man" who is the stock-in-trade of Communists, political agitators, and windy lecturing clubwomen.

And if a jolly drunken holy man of my faith sometime rates a place in my day's work, then I'll say in typescript that he is a bull-necked Irish busy-izzy, and his Irishness will be necessary to the vignette because a bull-necked Irisher is totally different from a bull-necked Pole or Hindu or Chinese. I'd be dishonest with myself and the reader too if I sketched him as a gift lily, peer of all the saints, and devoid of earthy identity. If the pressure Gestapo can find any prejudice here, as an excuse for letting fly with a splash of pushcart scurrility containing many repetitions of the prefix *anti*, they are more than welcome to put it under a microscope and keep it there.

Perhaps I do not comprehend prejudice because I am a jumble of blood strains whose bearers never kidded themselves, never cared a rap about the world's opinion, and consequently were let strictly alone at their own amusing devices. Perhaps it is because I have dwelt in a jumble of odd places, among jumbled souls who cared no more about my origins than I about theirs. The paternal strain in my family was washed ashore into 1630 New England without pious bleating, astride a keg of Hollands. The rest, surviving a hanged pirate and a clerical forebear who in the name of *Iahveh Sabaoth* rubbed the breasts of pretty young girls "to rout their demons," is a Lewis Carroll sort of hash, of Prussian and French and Romany *rai* and Black Irish. I am proud of those strains and proud of the so-called illegitimacy which occasionally can be found among them, but I never wear them upon my shoulders, either as epaulettes or as chips to be knocked off. They merely constitute my guaranty against ever being included among the faceless, and they also afford excellent armor against any danger of drowning in racial or genealogical or geographical indignation.

GETTING back to the pressure Mafia, which screams and summons grizzly bears every time some writer tailors a telltale uniform to fit a member of this race or that, I confess it impossible for me to fathom a state of mind which, pretending to be honest and normal, denies any man's identity for any reason this side of the Bertillon galleries, the insane asylums, and the legislative halls. That, truly, is akin to denying that many Irishmen have simian upper lips and possess little ethnic kinsmen whom Italian organ-grinders degrade with tin cups and red Spahi jackets; akin to making Don Juan a chorus boy and Cleopatra a union-suited milkmaid from the tall grass; all of a piece with trying to make me believe that Little Black Sambo is a more delightful companion when dipped in Clorox.

Charles Dickens's Fagin, about whom there has been an ill-bred caterwauling of late, is for me

a sinister Oriental rogue. But his Bill Sykes, obvious Anglo-Saxon and certainly an implied Christian, is a far darker scoundrel who has haunted my nightmares since childhood. But is it on record that all the archbishops of Christendom ran bawling for Dickens's blood over Bill, or over Undertaker Sowerberry, most unappetizing symbol of the breed of men who function in the shadow of the Church as humble washers of the dead?

PRESSURE groups are evil, and all writing persons will do well to avoid the odor of contamination. He who speaks for himself alone, bowing to nobody in his writing, will never have to send his self-respect and his conscience to a delousing station.

If any vacillating young writer needs a sorry example to sober him, let him look at the scared and scary newspapers. Let him look at the movies, babbling into a terrified beard under a pressure which once could have been liquidated forever by one bold and savage counter-attack, at a moment which is no longer propitious. Let him peep into the infantile bedlam of radio, with whose crazy backstairs I am not unfamiliar, and by all means let him cock an eye on television, whose current plight is suggestive of an alarmed and greedy chameleon trying to waltz on a Scottish plaid. All have earned a measure of scorn from intelligent and decent men.

Observing, let the writer note that those who wield pressure threats are fooling always with a boomerang. There are too many solid instances in history where man, deprived of his harmless slapstick and the right to tell the truth, has suddenly reached deep among repressed humors and come up with reckless tar pot and headsman's bright axe—a nasty gesture, hardly conducive to dignity and the build-up of human welfare. History is cyclic, and there is always a limit to the lericompooping that human nature will take.

Though at this moment many an honest writer is being beaten close to the wailing wall by anti-social pressures besetting his trade, he can save and strengthen himself—and his skill and his fellow-writers—by coherent and stolid resistance, always remembering that no power can make him write other than he wishes to write, and all threats and trends be damned. He need never try to transform himself into a bleeding-heart, a sociologist, or an economist.

Dignity? If man has any dignity left, it is only the writer's job to report upon it, if he notices it at all. If he fails at reporting, if he tries to shape and shepherd and soar, he falls on his wistful nose as a writer and becomes a Man with a Mission, and the writing trade is well rid of him as a propagandist and a nuisance.

Courage, of course, will bring the honest writer many a foul blow in the pocketbook, wherefore he can remember this:

The author who hoards his real talents for avocational writing usually fares better than the man who wastes his precious words and ideas for the glory of someone else, on a paid vocational writing stint in some city room, advertising foundry, or other [Continued on Page 28]

Why Doesn't That Story Sell?

If you analyze it, perhaps you will discover one—or several—of 13 fundamental errors

By CHARLES CARSON

IF YOU want a path beaten to your door, in a new gadget for writers. These devices are of two general types, the *mechanical* and the *literary*. The *mechanical* contrivance demands no writing ability whatever. You merely spin a wheel or press a button and plots are shelled out like sandwiches at the automat.

The *literary* gadget is designed for the more adventurous and does require a certain amount of thinking. It may appear in the form of a textbook, a course, or a "system." Usually it promises to make all orthodox methods of writing obsolete. *Why give your brain a beating when you can produce stories simply and easily with the new Escalator Method of Authorship?*

The appeal lies not in the creative value of the device, but in its newness. In a country where no automobile is any good unless the current model has several added features, we have come to believe that everything worth owning or knowing has been invented in the last decade. We have learned to accept newness and call it progress.

Yet the fact remains that a writer is using the same brain that man has used for centuries, and the brain is the writer's sole creative tool. Not only are we using the same brain to do good writing, but we are using it to make the same mistakes. I have read other people's manuscripts for 17 years, and for more than ten years I have failed to discover one new type of error.

Not long ago, in a meeting of the Professional Writers League, certain members wanted to know why their stories hadn't sold. There followed the usual answers concerning slant, timeliness, taboo, etc. Finally, I ventured to suggest that possibly the rejected material was not written well enough. The president asked me to describe some of the common errors beginners were making, which I did at the next meeting.

Following is a list of the reasons for rejection that I outlined. If your manuscript hasn't sold, the chances are it contains some of these shortcomings.

1. *Follows no accepted pattern.* Editors want

Charles Carson was born in the Ozarks, a descendant of Kit Carson. For 20 years he has been a writer, his work including fiction, special articles, textbooks, and radio plays. *Mountain Troubadour, set in his native hills, is his latest novel. He is well known as a lecturer on fiction and other literary subjects.*

originality within the scope of established patterns, but they do not often care for experiments in literary forms except for experimental magazines.

2. *Hybrid material.* Is your manuscript a story, an article, an essay, or an editorial? Is it drama, humor, romance, satire, adventure, or inspirational prose? Make it *something*, but never a hodgepodge of several somethings.

3. *Book plot in a miniature frame.* A short story is a story that is short. If you take enough plot for a novel and compress it into 6,000 words, it is not a short story but an outline of a long one.

4. *No reader identification.* Every fictionist has to know what *viewpoint* is. The errors I find are in a lack of viewpoint, change of viewpoint without due preparation, and use of the viewpoint of a character that is without due importance in the action.

5. *Dialogue without purpose.* Dialogue serves (a) to characterize the speaker, (b) to highlight the action, and/or (c) to bring the story forward. Two persons merely talking do not *make* dialogue.

6. *Statement without delineation.* A reporter tells what happened, while a fictionist portrays a situation rather than merely stating its existence. It isn't enough to make your reader believe that a thing happened—he wants to experience the happening.

7. *Author intrusion.* The readers wants to follow the action rather than the author's views of the action. The author stepping between his reader and the characters is something like a playwright standing on the stage during the presentation of a play and explaining it to the audience. If the scene is correctly portrayed, the reader has already become a part of the action and no commentary is needed.

8. *Lacks reader orientation.* The first hundred words should orient the reader to the main factors pertinent to the story. These are usually time, place, characters, their relation to each other, and whether the tone is to be light or serious. If weather, season of year, color of a man's topcoat, or anything else is to figure prominently in the story's development, it should be "planted" in the opening.

9. *Lacks story progression.* If you pick up a character, carry him through 5,000 words of action, and drop him where you found him, you haven't a story. Some goal should be attained, some decision reached, some lesson learned that gave his struggle significance. [Turn to Page 27]

TIPS FOR BEGINNERS

By ALAN SWALLOW

What are common pitfalls of the beginning writer, and how can one avoid them?

There are common errors made by each type of writer—the poet, the writer of fiction, the writer of non-fiction, etc. But the errors common to all of them are numerous. Here are a few:

1. Lack of interest in turning out a professional manuscript, both in appearance and in workmanship. To prevent this, be certain that your manuscript is done properly in appearance, but even more, that it is the best piece of workmanship of which you are capable at that time.

2. Lack of application of knowledge and common sense every step along the way, from securing ideas and information, through writing, to marketing. What we know we often don't act upon, and this is always a grave error.

3. Mistaken judgment that writing is accomplished all by inspiration—that craftsmanship, critical study, and analysis of markets are unimportant. Without these three one gets nowhere.

In what ways is the writer protected from plagiarism or literary piracy?

New writers worry much too much about this possibility. Literary piracy is quite rare and the new writer has the least reason to worry about it—for the simple reason that his work is commonly not good enough to sell, let alone for anyone to plagiarize!

The theory of the law is that literary property is protected as private property under common law until it is published; when it is published, it is protected only if it is copyrighted. Violation of the property right at either stage is ground for a civil suit for damages. Consult your lawyer at once if you find evidence of plagiarism of your materials.

What action can be taken by an author if a publishing firm does not purchase a manuscript submitted and also fails to return the manuscript in the return envelope provided?

(1) Report the difficulty to responsible organizations and trade journals, such as *Author & Journalist*. (2) After a reasonable lapse of time, and after a polite letter of inquiry, send a registered letter (return receipt requested) stating that the manuscript has been withdrawn from consideration; then send the manuscript to another market.

What procedure is used by magazines in determining the price paid for a manuscript?

Magazines normally pay according to a "rate" or scale, which will vary from magazine to maga-

zine. The rate will be upon the basis either of the "piece," that is, purchase of a story or article of certain general lengths, without regard for exact wordage; or upon the basis of the word, that is, so much payment per word. Most magazines have certain premium rates for consistent contributors, name writers, or especially valuable contributions.

Is it wise for a beginning writer to submit his work to a professional critic? Is the expense justified?

I don't think a flat answer is possible. This is a decision each writer must make for himself, depending upon his individual situation. Some factors he needs to consider are his present attainment in skill; his progress alone and without consultation; the availability of a critic for his kind of work; his own ability to learn from others; and how much he can afford. All these factors will vary greatly.

Some writers need the help more than others; some critics are undoubtedly better than others. But I do believe that almost every writer at one time or another (and I know some skilled and established ones who still use critical assistance) will need help from someone competent to give it, and that at the right stage for both writer and critic, the expenditure will be found valuable.

How much effect does strictly "commercial" writing have on any "serious" work one may wish to do?

This effect will vary according to the interests and temperament of the writer. Some writers can mix the two quite successfully. Others find themselves developing chiefly in one or the other. There is no pat answer. Most writers, however, after trying several kinds of writing, will settle on two or three and specialize in those. Probably few will specialize in one alone unless their success in it is exceptional or unless they are exceptionally single-minded. Some variety is truly a spice.

Is there a recommended way to gain experience and development of technique for one who is not interested in writing as a profession, but who finds in his work a need to do some writing?

This includes a great majority of persons, since it is most rare that a person at some time during his life does not need to turn out a few pieces of writing—professional reports, speeches, or other work related to his livelihood. Such persons should do as other writers do: (1) study critically writing of the type which is needed, and (2) practice writing.

When You Speak of SCENE

Analysis of 3,000 stories brings forth a brand new definition of one of the most important elements in fiction

By REX R. BENSON

DURING twenty years of research into short story structure one of the most plaguesome elements has been *scene*. It is one of those catch-words like *plot*, *action* and *narrative hook*, which everyone uses but no one knows much about. It took five years of reading textbooks, listening to teachers, and talking to writers to find that hardly any two of them had the same idea of what constituted scene.

Every story is made up of a number of scenes. The whole business of story writing is the fitting together of various scenes which "show a character faced with a problem and solving that problem by overcoming the obstacles inherent to it." But what is *scene*? You know it exists, is an integral part of every story. Being a concrete element it must have a descriptive and limiting definition. If the definition is true and logical it must apply to all scenes in all stories. But ask the next ten writers or teachers of writing you meet for their understanding of the term . . . and see how many different answers you get.

My own attempts to find out what makes stories tick have included the minute analysis of over 3,000 stories from the slicks and pulps of the past score of years. In the matter of *scene* my search was for a definition that would correctly block out any scene in any story.

Definitions accumulated from textbooks and teachers boiled down to a theatrical "change in stage setting," "camera angle," or "the action taking place in a given incident." None of those will apply in all cases. The first one is out because the characters, the boy and girl for instance, might be walking over the countryside or on a shopping tour of a dozen stores. In either case the stage setting would vary many times but there would not necessarily be a change of scene from the story standpoint. For the same reason, "camera angle" would mean nothing. The third explanation falls down because incidents in themselves do not make *scene*. Any scene may embody a number of incidents.

With the hackneyed definitions failing to stand the test, it was necessary to establish one that would fit all cases. Eventually this was done by accepting *scene* as the physical surroundings of

the viewpoint character where either a lapse of time or some action having a direct bearing on the plot occurs.

That definition seems to cover a lot of ground. Actually it doesn't because the meat of it lies in the final phrase: "Time or action having a direct bearing on the plot" is the important thing. It indicates a change in emotion or suspense; and those elements make scenes. However, any change in the "physical surroundings of the viewpoint character" is usually an indication of scene change. Scene change as the story moves and the viewpoint character moves as the story does.

To justify that definition of the word let's rehash some trite and standard explanations of scene . . . and they are not so imaginary but what I have heard them a dozen times:

"Scene? Why, that's where John and Mary got together. They are on a picnic when the scene opens and Mary has a chance to show how practical she is by the way she broils hamburgers over a campfire. Later, in her living-room, John looks back over the day, and the year before it during which Mary has been such a perfect pal. He realizes that the future would be pretty blank without her. He tells her of his love. The scene closes with them happily making plans for their life together."

Actually there are at least three legitimate scenes in that blumb and probably more, depending upon the full text of the copy.

Take another example: "The scene opens with John talking to Mom and Pop in the living-room while he waits for Mary to dress for their date. Pop is dead against John as a possible son-in-law and has so expressed himself to his family. But Mom is on the lovers' side. John is thirsty and says, 'Mom, I'm going to get a glass of water,' and heads for the kitchen. But Mom calls, 'Wait a minute, John, I have some cold lemonade in the ice-box.' She follows him. She rattles glasses and refrigerator door and under cover of the clatter whispers, 'John, Mary has told me all about it. I know you kids are going to elope to-night and you have my blessing. Mary's suitcase is packed and in the garage. Wait until Pop is listening to Walter Winchell and he won't hear anything else . . .' Then, raising her voice, she says, 'Here you are, John, this is better than water,' and they return to the living-room."

Scene? No. Again there are three distinct scenes outlined in that setting.

One more: "The scene opens in the ranch bunkhouse where the cowpokes are playing poker. Our hero says, 'Deal me out of this hand, gotta

Rex Benson is the author of two books of verse and a number of published stories and articles. He was formerly in daily newspaper work. For a number of years he has been engaged in teaching and in research on the structure of the short story. He resides in California.

stretch my legs.' He goes outside, rolls a cigar, and stands sizing up tomorrow's weather by the stars. A sudden scuffling and snorting from the horse corral start him on a run to investigate. The trouble proves to be only a couple of salty bronses fighting. A little cussing and a thrown dirt clod quiet the ruckus, and he returns to the poker game."

Correct, *one scene*. But let's change it a little: "Nearing the corral, he sees the milling horses stream out through a gap in the far fence, urged on by a half-dozen silent riders. Black Bart's renegades stampeding the remuda! No saddle horses tomorrow . . . no round-up of shipping

AMATEUR SONG WRITER

By S. OMAR BARKER

These are the songs she'd like to write
For others to play or sing;
A symphony for stars at night,
A fugue for trees in spring;

Majestic marches for the years.
Chants for the windy seas—
But inspiration slips its gears
On themes as grand as these!

Even the ditties she turns out
Win neither cash nor glory.
She mails them hopefully about—
Always the same old story.

Deride her not. Her songs, it's true,
May not fulfill her wishes,
But still they give her something new
To hum while washing dishes!

beef for the buyer . . . no money to stave off foreclosure on the ranch."

Corny as the devil, huh? But it adds another scene to the story.

Now, let's go back and analyze those blurbs to segregate the scenes, taking into account what has been said about *scene* being related to both time and action.

In the first John and Mary dingus the first scene can cover a running account of their outing. It might be limited to a few minutes or a single hour, or it might run through the whole day and include their rambles over the hills, a swim in the river and their being stung by yellow-jackets, as well as the hamburger cooking. None of those minor happenings would have any effect on the duration of the scene. Unless the author brings in an emotional love episode or some other incident *having a direct bearing on the plot*, the entire picnic will be classified as a single scene.

The second scene opens in the living-room when John drops into reminiscence. Here is where the relationship of both time and place

applies to scene. Bodily, John is still "on stage" with Mary but mentally, and for the purposes of the story, he has returned (and transported the reader with him) to times and places of the past. He has taken himself into other physical surroundings. The author's method of portraying that return, the Manner of Presentation, has also changed from the immediate *now* of MOVEMENT to the NARRATIVE of past history. That change makes a decided difference in tempo and emotion and is a legitimate change of *scene*.

Then, when John mentally returns to the present and reaches for Mary with that old light in his eye, the scene comes back "on stage" again. The author shifts his Manner of Presentation to the dramatic emotion of ACTION. Love declares itself; electric changes are taking place in two lives; the plot thickens. This is one of the high points of the story. The scene will close with John and Mary in a tight clench, building dreams of a first-mortgage home and five kids.

In the second version of the love yarn, the first scene is in the living room up to the time John goes to the kitchen. If he merely quenches his thirst and returns there is no change of scene, even though he is the viewpoint character and is temporarily in different surroundings.

But the moment Mom whispers instructions to him, and thus allies herself with the lovers against Pop, who is the opposing force, she does something definitely pertinent to the outcome of the plot. Her action is forwarding the solution of the lovers' problem and makes the kitchen episode a distinct scene.

The third scene begins when she raises her voice to offer John the lemonade and they return to the living-room. It will carry through Mary's arrival and the "good night" words when she and John leave for the movie.

In the section from the Western opus, the poker game, our hero's dropping out for a hand, and his investigation of the noise in the corral are but atmosphere of the setting, local color for fixing the situation, the locale, and the characters. The scuffle among the bronses was merely a natural incident of horse nature and *meant nothing to the plot*. So the hero could walk back and rejoin the poker game without a break in the original scene.

In the second version, however, the excitement in the corral was man-made, caused by the villains in the story. Running off the ranch's saddle stock will prevent the next day's roundup, which in turn will mean no cattle shipped and no money to save the ranch from the Shylock who holds the mortgage. That noise in the corral has *a direct bearing on the plot*. The moment the hero sees what causes it marks the beginning of a new scene.

SO WHAT? Why this minute analysis of *scene*?

Because *scene* is a vital unit of the writer's equipment and every journeyman should be familiar with his tools. Also, scene is an invaluable aid in plotting. Above and beyond that, for the writer who really wants to learn something about the wares he sells, the [Continued on Page 29]

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WHERE TO SELL LIGHT VERSE

A list of paying markets that you can crack with good humorous, witty, or romantic contributions

THE term *light verse* covers a wide field, ranging from the homespun humor of your country weekly to the deft, satirical sophisticated verse that appears in the *New Yorker*. Edgar Guest writes light verse; so did William S. Gilbert and Austin Dobson—but there is a world of difference. Perhaps the best definition is a negative one: light verse is anything in verse which is not serious poetry.

A good 90 per cent of the verse appearing in magazines except the definitely literary ones is light verse. And some of the literary publications will take it if it reaches their standards.

So your chance of placing light verse—and especially your chance of getting paid for it—is infinitely better than the opportunity to get serious poetry into print.

True, the competition is heavy from writers accomplished in this field. At the same time, there is practically no preference for "big names." The best bet is probably in humor, not too corny yet not too sophisticated or recondite; most light verse is read by everyday folks. Too, there is always an opening for sentimental or romantic light verse that carries a fresh note.

The following list covers major paying markets. Trade journals and other specialized publications use light verse occasionally, but usually it demands some background in the specific field with which the periodical deals. Sometimes verse can be sold to advertisers, but such a project is hardly worth trying without some personal *entrée* to the advertising field.

In the list *Acc.* means payment on acceptance; *Pub.* payment on publication.

Adventure, 205 E. 42nd St., New York 17. Verse of the rugged, outdoor type, preferably in ballad form. Good rates, *Acc.*
All-Story Love Magazine, 205 E. 42nd St., New York 17. Romantic verse, *Acc.*
American Legion Magazine, 580 5th Ave., New York 19. Light verse on family and general human foibles. First-class rates, *Acc.*
Atlantic Monthly, 8 Arlington St., Boston 16. Some satirical verse for department "Accents on Living." Good rates, *Acc.*
Better Homes & Gardens, 1716 Locust St., Des Moines 3, Iowa. Verse about building, children, family life. Good rates, *Acc.*
Capper's Farmer, 916 Kansas Ave., Topeka, Kan. Verses carrying Midwestern rural family appeal. *Acc.*
Châtelaine, 481 University Ave., Toronto, Canada. Verse must carry feminine appeal. Good rates, *Acc.*
The Christian Science Monitor, 1 Norway St., Boston 15. Verse, prevaillingly serious, but some in lighter vein. Good rates, *Acc.*
Collier's, 640 5th Ave., New York 19. Very brief verse, definitely humorous and of general appeal. Very limited market. First-class rates, *Acc.*
Columbia, 45 Wall St., New Haven, Conn. Verse must be appropriate to a magazine of Catholic ideals. Good rates, *Acc.*
Commonwealth, 959 8th Ave., New York 19. Sophisticated verse of high quality. Appeal predominantly feminine. First-class rates, *Acc.*
Country Gentleman, Independence Square, Philadelphia 5. Humorous verse appealing to men and women. First-class rates, *Acc.*
Country Guide, 290 Vaughan St., Winnipeg, Canada. Verse of rural family appeal. *Acc.*
Deseret News Magazine, Box 1257, Salt Lake City 10, Utah. Limericks and similar humorous verse. *Pub.*

The Country Post, Sanbornville, N. H. A limited amount of light verse, no comic verse. Devoted to outdoor subjects. *Pub.*
Everywoman's Magazine, 16 E. 40th St., New York 19. Very brief verse. Limited market. *Acc.*
Empire Magazine of the Denver Post, 650 15th St., Denver 2, Colo. Verse up to 30 lines. *Acc.*
Extension, 1307 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago 5. Verse of general appeal that does not poke fun at established mores. This magazine circulates chiefly among Roman Catholics. Very good rates, *Acc.*
Farm Journal, 230 Washington Square, Philadelphia 5. Very short humorous verse and not too serious general poems. Very good rates, *Acc.*
The Flower Grower, Grand Central Terminal, New York 17. Limited amount of verse about gardens. *Pub.*
Garden, 432 4th Ave., New York 16. Short verse about gardeners' problems. *Pub.*
Grit, Williamsport 3, Pa. Verse of family appeal. Circulation mainly on farms and in small communities. *Acc.*
Mood Housekeeping, 57th St. and 8th Ave., New York 19. Light verse of quality with feminine appeal. First-class rates, *Acc.*
Harpers' Magazine, 49 E. 33rd St., New York 16. Verse is prevaillingly serious; some light verse of high quality. Good rates, *Acc.*
The Highway Traveler, 105 W. Madison St., Chicago 2, Ill. Verse must relate to automotive travel. Good rates, *Acc.*
Household, 912 Kansas Ave., Topeka, Kan. Brief humorous or otherwise light verse of appeal to home owners and homemakers. Limited market. Very good rates, *Acc.*
The Improvement Era, 50 N. Main St., Salt Lake City, Utah. Verse up to 30 lines. May be light but must represent sound moral ideals and should appeal to youth, especially those of Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. *Acc.*
It Could Be Verse and Stepping Stones to Happiness, Box 170, Bryant, Ark. Humorous verse to 8 lines. *Pub.*
The Kansas City Star, Star Bldg., Kansas City, Mo. Light as well as serious verse—brief. Preter work by authors within the newspaper's circulation area (Missouri and Kansas). Good rates, *Pub.*
Love Book Magazine, 205 E. 42nd St., New York 17. Romantic verse, *Acc.*
Love Short Stories, 205 E. 42nd St., New York 17. Love verse of general feminine appeal. *Acc.*
Maclean's, 481 University Ave., Toronto, Canada. Light, timely verse not over 15 lines. Good rates, *Acc.*
Modern Bride, 366 Madison Ave., New York 17. Occasional verse about the problems of the newly wedded. *Acc.*
National Guardian, 17 Murray St., New York 7. Verse embodying social, economic, and political satire from the liberal standpoint. *Pub.*
National Parent-Teacher, 600 S. Michigan Blvd., Chicago 5. Verse about school problems from teachers' and parents' point of view. Good rates, *Acc.*
New England Homestead, Myrick Bldg., Springfield 3, Mass. Timely verse of appeal to rural audience. *Pub.*
New Love Magazine, 205 E. 42nd St., New York 17. Brief love verse, *Acc.*
New York Herald-Tribune, 230 W. 41st St., New York 16. Short topical verse. Also reprints verse of this type. Good rates, *Pub.*
New York Mirror, 235 E. 45th St., New York 17. Verse suited to a big, diversified metropolitan audience. *Pub.*
New York Times, 229 W. 43rd St., New York 16. Prevaillingly serious but some light verse. Good rates, *Pub.*
New York Times Magazine, 229 W. 43rd St., New York 16. Edited separately from the *New York Times* proper. Timely verse with humorous slant. Good rates, *Acc.*
The New Yorker, 25 W. 43rd St., New York 18. Satirical and humorous verse appealing to a sophisticated audience. First-class rates, *Acc.*
Pack O' Fun, 205 E. 42nd St., New York 17. Humorous verse, chiefly about girls, up to 42 lines. No objection to the risqué. *Acc.*
Park East, 220 E. 42nd St., New York 17. Witty, sophisticated verse appealing to metropolitan dwellers. Good rates, *Acc.*
Pittsfielder, 1323 M St., N.W., Washington 5, D. C. Humorous verse, usually topical, appealing to folks in smaller communities. *Acc.*
PEN (Public Employees' News), Box 2541, Denver 1, Colo. Brief witty verse, *Acc.*
Personal Romances, 295 Madison Ave., New York 17. Light romantic verse up to 14 lines. *Acc.*
The Progressive Farmer, 821 N. 19th St., Birmingham 2, Ala. Humorous verse appealing to farmers and their families. *Pub.*
Railroad Magazine, 205 E. 42nd St., New York 17. Limited amount of light verse reflecting knowledge of the railroad industry. Good rates, *Acc.*
Revealing Romances, 23 W. 47th St., New York 19. Romantic verse, preferably under 18 lines. *Acc.*
Romance, 205 E. 42nd St., New York 18. Romantic verse under 20 lines. *Acc.*
The Rotarian, 35 E. Walker Drive, Chicago 1. Limited amount of humorous verse appealing to business and professional men such as make up Rotary Clubs. *Acc.*
St. Anthony Messenger, 1615 Republic St., Cincinnati 10, Ohio. Far more published by the Franciscan Fathers. Both romantic and humorous verse for a mature audience of religious-minded lay folk. Good rates, *Acc.*

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Sunday Digest, David C. Cook Publishing Co., Elgin, Ill. Pleasant verse for general family reading. Acc.
 The Saturday Evening Post, Independence Square, Philadelphia, Pa. Brief humorous verse of unexceptionable technique. First-class rates. Acc.
 Saturday Night, 73 Richmond St. W., Toronto, Canada. Time-ly humorous verse on subjects of interest to Canadians. Preference to Canadian authors. Pub.

This Day, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis 18, Mo. Whole-some humorous verse for Christian families. Acc.
 Tie, Box 350, Albany 1, N. Y. Humorous or satirical verse of interest to dentists though not necessarily relating specifically to dentistry. Up to 60 lines. Acc.

Today's Woman, 67 W. 44th St., New York 18. A limited amount of pleasant, sometimes humorous, verse, chiefly about the home. Appeals largely to young married women. Good rates. Acc.

The Toronto Star Weekly, 80 King St. W., Toronto, Canada. Short verse of various types. Good rates. Acc.
 True Confessions, 87 W. 44th St., New York 18. Verse carrying sentiment appealing to women. Acc.

Weird Tales, 9 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 20. Verse dealing with the supernatural or the bizarre. Pub.
 Woman's Home Companion, 640 5th Ave., New York 19. Limited amount of light verse. First-class rates. Acc.

Yankee, Dublin, N. H. Verse not necessarily dealing with New England and like the rest of the magazine, but preferably embodying humor of the New England type. Pub.

Your Dog, Kelker & Cameron Sts., Harrisburg, Pa. Human interest verse about dogs. Acc.
 Zane Grey's Western Magazine, Racine, Wis. Verse, humorous or not, with authentic slant on the Old West (1860-1890). Good rates. Acc.

Poet's lucky break

By MALCOLM HYATT

YOU may write poetry flawlessly. Your philosophical gems, perfect, rhymes and exquisite poetical touch may combine to bring you nothing but countless rejection slips. In that case, the only thing to do is keep the poems *persistently* flocking to editor's desks and hope for the lucky break.

My break was born on the pages of a trade journal! Yes, it is rare that trade journals publish poetry, but I took a chance one day, and sent a poem to a magazine called *Floorcraft*, published in Brazil, Indiana.

It wasn't long before the poem came back with a letter from Editor Dave E. Smalley. It was a kind and encouraging analysis of the poem with the advice to "try again." In the meantime, Mr. Smalley sent me a complimentary copy of the magazine. Imagine, I said to myself, a flooring magazine publishing fine poetry that does not allude to the flooring industry!

After studying the type of poetry Mr. Smalley used—patriotic and some seasonal verses—I wrote a poem called "Song of Triumph." As it turned out, the poem was a triumph for me, for a few days later a letter of acceptance arrived from Mr. Smalley. Later, the poem appeared on the poetry page of *Floorcraft*.

Then things began to happen! The poem was read by officials of the Hotel Governor Clinton in New York City. They liked it so much that they asked Editor Smalley for permission to reprint. Mr. Smalley courteously asked me about it and of course I gave him the green light.

That was my break! For the poem appeared as a feature on the hotel's famous Coral Room menu. It wasn't long before my poems were accepted by *Christian Science Monitor*, *Kansas City Poetry Magazine*, *Portland Oregonian*, *Empire Magazine*, *New York Daily Mirror*, *Clear Horizons*.

So I say, don't ever give up! That ever elusive lucky break is bound to show up. It's only a matter of time—even for the poet!

VANTAGE PRESS REOPENS HOLLYWOOD OFFICE

Beth Kramer, New York Literary Agent and Editor, Named Manager

Authors on West Coast invited to send book manuscripts or call in person

New York, N.Y.—Alan F. Pater, president, has just announced the reopening of Vantage Press's Hollywood office under the supervision of Beth Kramer, former New York literary agent.

Miss Kramer was sent to the West Coast from the New York office of Vantage Press where she was associate editor. Her experience in dealing with authors, and in manuscript reading, evaluation and criticism make her especially fitted to discuss publication problems with writers.

Miss Kramer succeeds Laura Saunders, who resigned for reasons of health.

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If you live on or near the West Coast, you are invited to write for free literature explaining the Vantage plan of publication; if you prefer, telephone or write for a personal interview. Address your letter to: Beth Kramer, VANTAGE PRESS, INC., 6356 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood 28, Calif. Telephone: GLadstone 8487.

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Pictures for free

By VIVIAN HANSBROUGH

NON-FICTION writers have to do more than produce words that please an editor.

They must also secure photographs to illustrate their articles. Good pictures sell many an article that would have no chance without illustrations. How to find appropriate pictures is the problem.

Perhaps my experience in selling many illustrated feature articles to magazine sections of newspapers in Arkansas, my home state, may help the puzzled beginner.

Forest fires destroy millions of acres of timber annually. I went to the Forest Service office at my state capital and asked for permission to look through their files of pictures. There were hundreds of clear 8 x 10 glossy prints, showing every phase of forestry protection.

I selected four which made a sequence. There was one showing a man standing in a great grove of pine trees. The second picture was a study in contrast, showing a raging forest fire against a night background. Next was the destroyed forest, with stumps and ruins. Last was the forest ranger's tower, from which the observer may detect a forest fire in its early stages.

The Forest Service director gave me the four pictures free. On the same day, I carried them to the editor of the *Arkansas Democrat*. He had recently carried a lengthy story about forest fire prevention. However, because the pictures were excellent, he asked for 50-word captions for each picture. Using bulletins given to me by the forester and matter secured at the county agent's office, I condensed the facts within the word limits.

The result was a picture story on the front page of the magazine section. Green ink was used for the heading, "Keep Arkansas Green." Gold ink played up the raging forest fire. The layout proved attractive, and the check was liberal pay for the amount of work required.

Quite different was my experience in preparing an article about elevated water storage tanks. In an issue of *Steelways* I saw some pictures of the various types of water towers. I recognized one as a tower in a town only 23 miles from my home. A splendid general article was introduced by the catchy title, "Water in the Air." First, I wrote to the editor of *Steelways*, and secured permission to use the title and parts of the article.

A trip to the superintendent of the local waterworks revealed that a booklet had been published recently by the research department of the state university. In tabular form were statistics describing the various public water systems in the state. The public would hardly be interested in such a presentation. Using a conversational style, and weaving in the facts about water tanks, I wrote 1,400 words. Yet without illustrations the story was unsalable.

With the *Steelways* photographs there was a credit line for Chicago Bridge and Iron Works. I wrote to this company, asking for three or four

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glossy prints of different types of water tanks in Arkansas. In return came three large air views of tanks in widely separated sections of the state.

Clear pictures, an interesting title, factual text in popular wordage, produced a feature story accepted by the *Arkansas Gazette*.

It is an education in itself for a writer to trace down material on a given subject. There is a Singer sewing machine manufacturing plant within traveling distance of my home town. I wrote to this factory for information about the plant. The superintendent responded with a two-page history of the plant, and an invitation to come for a personal visit. A tour of the factory supplied first-hand description of the processes of manufacture. An air picture of the plant was given to me.

Next I went to the Singer Sewing Center at the state capital, and explained to the manager that I needed photographs of old and new sewing machines. He wrote to New York, and secured glossy prints of the first machine perfected by Isaac M. Singer, and of one of the newest models manufactured in the plant I had visited. The encyclopedia furnished a concise history of sewing machines.

In newspaper files for 1882 I found an advertisement for treadle sewing machines. The state microfilm department made a glossy reproduction of this advertisement to accompany my article.

There were the ingredients: four pictures, information about the history of sewing machines, and the eye-witness account of the sewing machine factory in the state. When these ingredients were combined, the result pleased the editor of one of the state papers.

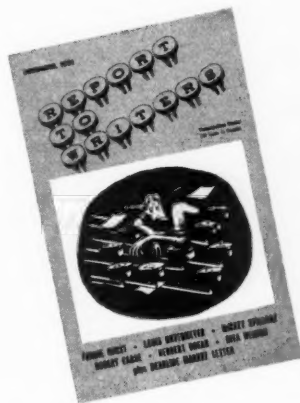
News features are acceptable in almost all newspaper offices. An agriculture teacher who wished publicity about his work hired a commercial photographer to be on hand while his students and the home economics girls prepared and processed more than 1,000 cans of peaches. This teacher brought me the pictures, showing in sequence the steps in the canning process. Since the photographs were made by a professional, and the agriculture teacher supplied the factual information, it was easy to develop a news feature that was acceptable on first submission.

HISTORICAL material abounds in every community. The town of Piggott, Arkansas, was founded by a doctor in the 1870's. An old photograph of the doctor and his wife was available. A picture of the modern post office bearing his name was easy to secure. The president of the bank is a local historian who has spent a lifetime collecting information about the community. With his helpful cooperation, I wrote an article, "Dr. Piggott's Namesake," and used the two pictures.

The state highway department supplied me pictures and information for a pictorial story, using 11 scenes of early roads contrasted with modern highways. Because it was presented in time to be used on the Sunday preceding the vote on a big highway bond issue, the newspaper editor was delighted to receive it.

APRIL, 1952

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My First Sports Story

[Continued from Page 13]

some have gone to some pretty high pay markets
—many of them have made the covers on the
pulp.

While more spectators see basketball than any
other sport, according to statistics, a basketball
story is sometimes rather hard to sell, and I don't
know why—although I have written a few such
stories and have sold them. Baseball and fight
are the old reliables, with football a seasonal item
on the sport reader's menu. Hockey is hard to
sell and so is track. One of my friends, a well-
known sports-story writer, once knocked out a
yarn on log-rolling and he had not sold it ac-
cording to my last report. I doubt if it ever will
sell.

Recently I wrote a motorcycle racing yarn,
"Hot Shoes for Hammerhead," and I sold it
second time out, a great surprise to me. It will
be out in one of Columbia Publication's maga-
zines, possibly *All Sports* or *Super Sports*.

The writer should, of course, have knowledge
of the game about which he is writing. If he is
writing a baseball story, he should at least know
that three strikes put a batter back on the bench.
The more you know about a sport, the better you
can write about it, of course.

A would-be sports writer should go to basket-
ball games, baseball games, and see sports, for to
see them is to know them. Then, if he has a
"fictioneer's" mind (and in my opinion no per-
son can be a successful author unless his mind
has the ability to turn incidents into stories), he
can see some item of interest, some small bit of
drama, in each contest he witnesses—be it track or
basketball or football or baseball or prizefight.

In my story "Hot Shoes for Hammerhead," the
protagonist is a red-headed, ugly-looking gent
who has three goals to reach: one, win the race;
two, win the girl; three, overcome his fear of the
roaring, spitting bikes. This fear, which plays a
large part in the story, is caused by his having
run over and killed a fellow racer in a spill on
the curve of the track.

How he overcomes his fear makes up the plot
of my story. I never plot. I get my characters
lined up correctly in what is sometimes referred
to as "my mind," I have their goals clear in
mind, and then I put them on the stage and
merely record how each works out his destiny.
This sounds simple. I can assure you, from the
bottom of my heart, that it is not simple. Re-
cently I finished my sixtieth Western book, a
novel starring my characters, Buck McKee and
Tortilla Joe, and *Troubled Grass* was harder to
write than my first Western book, written in 1913,
The Boothill Buckaroo.

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Why Doesn't That Story Sell?

[Continued from Page 17]

10. *Incorrect slant.* I find stories with *Esquire* material and *Collier's* length, with a slick paper plot and a pulp heroine, with 5,000 words of copy and a short-short ending. Each publication has its special requirements, and the writer who studies them is more likely to collect the checks.

11. *Problem solved by circumstance.* Ordinarily, it is expected that the protagonist will get himself out of a dilemma by his own efforts. If, during his struggle, things manage to straighten themselves out, or if a secondary character comes along and offers a solution the main figure hasn't thought of, the story breaks down at the climax.

12. *Outcome not satisfying.* Readers no longer want saccharine endings, but they still expect some reasonable compensation. Story writing is more than an intellectual venture: it is primarily a means of bringing pleasure to the reader. The reader is served best when you bring a profound and lasting satisfaction to the fictional character with whom he can identify himself.

13. *Original problem unsolved.* The ending of a good story should be the outcome of a series of logical events which are set off with the opening. Therefore, if a problem is introduced in the opening (which is usually the case), it isn't enough at the climax merely to compensate a character for his misfortune by rewarding him with something new. The original problem should be solved, even though the solution may not come about in the manner expected.

If you are a textbook reader or a writing class attendee, you will already have heard much of the foregoing. But if you aren't selling as consistently as you think you should, possibly you aren't using all the knowledge you have. Sometimes it is the full application of what we know that is vital, rather than a search for new ideas or systems.

I hold that there are no rules in writing in the sense that there are rules in grammar, because the story teller of today writes to entertain and his work is a means rather than an end. To achieve this means, one must understand certain principles. It is these principles I follow rather than rules. If you aren't violating any of the principles contained in the 13 points presented above, you are probably on the right track.



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Writer, Tell the Truth

[Continued from Page 16]

anonymous hack niche. Let him rest his brain in a brokerage office all day; on almost any non-writing job he will eat well.

Pressure Camorristas can be taught a lesson by those who remember this self-evident point: The sensibilities of thought-control police, self-appointed or political, clerical or lay, can never establish or maintain literary criteria. Today the writer still has it in his power to pin them to his bib, and, suiting defense to the mannerless vulgarity of attack, belch them back across the horizon.

Memory of an *American Mercury* editor's bout with the Watch and Ward Society's provocateurs on Boston Common, in that happy age when North America had a civilized monthly review, is a memory still fresh. Fresh also is the thundering legal opinion, against censors and pornographers-at-heart, which admitted James Joyce's *Ulysses* to

WRITER'S GRIST

By HELEN WATERMAN

A writer can well afford to be Patient, full of philosophy.

Bothersome dogs and the brats they bark at

Inspire bright gems for the housewife market;

The neighbor who ruins your costly fence

May turn up in *Harper's* a few months hence.

The driver who dents your unsullied fender

Becomes a pulp villain (of opposite gender).

Whatever annoys you about your wife

Is good for a check from *Woman's Life*.

Anything that arouses your ire,

Properly viewed, may serve to inspire;

And, confounding the eds who return your MS's,

You can always write rules for becoming successes.

the United States. In passing, can anyone fancy Joyce setting out to butter up the "dignity of people"?

Believe me, when I work at my typewriter I am never concerned with the alleged dignity of people, washed or unwashed, common or uncommon, any more than I am concerned with telling lies about the shapes of their noses, the slants of their eyes, or the polish on the hides that God gave them. Nor do I ever feel that I am executing a mission on behalf of all mankind. If I did, my doctor would have me put away for indulging unseemly delusions.

AUTHOR & JOURNALIST

Finally, for those who have been led to believe that there exist anywhere any races of *Ur-bürger*, of divinely endowed supercitizens immune to the caricature, and parody and bald truth that are part of all human existence, I'd like to point in a spirit of catharsis to two loud and militant exponents of just such nonsense.

They are no longer with us. Their names were Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini.

The latter, according to the record, started his adult life both as writer and as uplifter—of his commoner-than-common fellow man.

When You Speak of Scene

[Continued from Page 20]

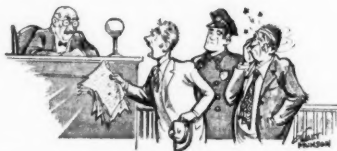
understanding of scene will show a very interesting fact in the constant pattern of the short story.

In more than 3,000 stories that I have torn apart, the number of scenes has been remarkably close. The number varies from eight to 15, but better than 50 per cent of them have exactly 11, and that figure is but a fraction less than the average for the entire plot. Why? I dunno. Neither do the writers. Most of them will laugh at the idea that a story should have, or that most stories do have, a given number of scenes. But I contend that 3,000 stories is a fair cross-section of the magazine fiction of the past few years and that when 50 per cent of them show 11 scenes you can't laugh off the constant pattern.

Type of story (leaving out the psychological, stream-of-consciousness thing), plot, problem, motivation, characters, locale have no bearing on the number of scenes. A saga of sagebrush scoundrels in a Western, the yens and yearnings of youthful passion in the love pulps, or those stories of Apache raids, daring adventures in sea, air, or jungle setting, or the wily machinations of red-headed secretaries that net the boys 50 cents a word in the top markets—all end up with a close approximation of those standard 11 scenes.

With that fact established and a single clear definition of scene accepted, the problem of plot outline is greatly eased. Get what you know to be definite scenes down on paper without bothering about the connective writing. The connective writing will supply the rest of the scenes.

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Underworld Talk

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ALKY. An alcoholic.
BANG, OR BANG UP. The thrill accompanying the injection of dope, or the description of the actual injection.
BROAD. A woman who frequents the underworld or associates with underworld characters.
BUSTED. Arrested or exposed.
CANNON. An accomplished pickpocket.
CASHING IN. (1) Dying. (2) Quitting a racket before exposure.
COP A PLEA. To plead guilty to a charge.
COP OUT. To make a confession.
GREEP. A petty racketeer who makes money by telling the relatives of persons listed in obituaries that the deceased owed him money.
DREAM. (1) Doing anything in an easy manner. (2) The images that appear in the thoughts of drug addicts.
FALL. A criminal's arrest and conviction.
FIX. (1) Buying someone's influence. (2) Supplying dope.
FIXER. (1) One who buys and sells influence. (2) A dope peddler.
FRONTING. Conducting a racket for a silent partner.
JIGGER. One who looks out for the police during the commission of a crime.
HEAT. (1) A gun. (2) Pressure from the police.
HEELED. (1) Well armed. (2) Well supplied with money.
HOOD. Usually a hired gunman. Sometimes merely a contraction of the word *hoodlum*.
HOT-BOX. A car stolen to pull a job.
ICE. Jewelry. As a verb, it means to kill.
JOHN. Any honest, respectable citizen.
LOADED. Well supplied with money.
M. Morphine.
MACKMAN. A pander or white slaver.

MAE WEST. An apparatus, similar to a vise, which is used to force open a safe.
MARIE. Marijuana.
MOLOTOV COCKTAIL. A bomb made of bottles filled with gasoline.
MOLL BUZZER. A pickpocket who specializes in lifting wallets from women's shoulder purses.
MUSCLE PLAY. Act of enforcing one's will by violence.
PAPERHANGING. Passing phony or forged checks.
PATSY. An individual who takes the blame for another's crime.
PETEMAN. One who blows safes open to rob them.
PIGEON. A victim of trickery.
PLAYING. Free spending of illegally gained money.
QUEER. (1) Counterfeit money. (2) A homosexual.
REGULAR. A term applied to underworld members.
RIPPER. A safecracker who opens safes by tearing them open.
SACK. A foin of assassination where the victim is knocked out, bound up with a rope around his knees and neck, and placed in a sack. The victim is tied in such a manner as to make him choke himself to death.
SAP. A blackjack or similar instrument.
SCORE. The loot from a robbery, stickup, or other crime.
SELLOUT. Betrayal by friends or associates.
SHORT. An automobile, usually stolen.
SQUEEZE. Act of being intimidated.
STRIPPING. Opening a safe by removing layers from its walls.
TRUMPING. Foiling a double-cross.
VIRGIN BANDIT. One who preys on under-age girls.
WASHING. The act of killing.
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